



LEXINGTON - FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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New partnership with Midway College gives police recruits opportunity to earn degrees

Sixteen new members of the Lexington police force will soon receive an Associate of Arts degree in Law Enforcement from Midway College, the first graduates of a new partnership between the college and the city.

"We have many reasons to be proud of our Division of Police, but we are particularly proud of our high training standards and the educational attainment level of our officers," Mayor Jim Newberry said.

Lexington police recruits, many of whom already hold a bachelor's or associate degree when they enter the city's police Training Academy, undergo eight months of training, then train for an additional three months in the field, riding with more experienced officers. The soon-to-be Midway graduates completed the Training Academy on April 11, and are now in field training. After field training, they will graduate from Midway.

Under the Midway program, the college recognizes some of the courses taught in the Training Academy for credit toward an associate degree in law enforcement. The partnership

to offer the associate degree grew out of conversations in 2006 between Midway's President Dr. William B. Drake, Jr. and Police Chief Ronnie Bastin, who was then an assistant chief.

Noting that several Lexington police officers have completed baccalaureate degrees with Midway, and others are currently enrolled in Midway's bachelor's-degree-completion program in Homeland Security Corporate Assessment and Management, Drake commented that the partnership for the associate degree in law enforcement is another example of Midway's ongoing commitment to support and educate those who serve on the frontlines to improve and protect the quality of our citizens' lives. "We are quite proud," said Drake, "that in addition to the law enforcement degree, the great majority of our students complete other degrees vital to Kentucky's future in such critical areas as Nursing, Teacher Education, and Health Care Administration."

Bastin said Midway is able to certify courses taught by Training Academy instructors due to the high training standards set by the Division of Police. "Our instructors in the academy are certified by the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council, and many also hold master's degrees," Bastin said.

Overall, the police force puts a strong emphasis on education and training, said Public Safety Commissioner Tim Bennett. Almost half of the officers on the force hold four-year or two-year degrees. Approximately 84 percent of Lexington officers have completed some college classes. Each year, all officers undergo mandatory training and are encouraged to continue their educations. The division also provides many opportunities for officers to take continuing education classes.